

## Nutrition & Oral Health

Eating a nutritious diet can help prevent gum disease and tooth decay. Foods high in sugars, carbohydrates, and starches contribute to the build-up of plaque acids that over time can cause tooth enamel to break down, resulting in a cavity.

Instead of eliminating these foods from your diet, keep sugary and refined carbohydrate foods to a minimum in your overall diet. Also, get in the habit of brushing and flossing after each meal. If you are unable to brush after each meal, drinking water or chewing sugar free gum can help rinse the mouth and reduce the effects of plaque acids.



### Tips for Better Dental Health

1. Maintain a healthy diet. Choose from a variety of foods.
  - ✓ Whole grain breads and cereals
  - ✓ Fruit
  - ✓ Vegetables
  - ✓ Meat, poultry, and fish
  - ✓ Milk, cheese, and yogurt
2. Make sure water is available. Water can help wash foods away from mouth and helps lessen effects of sugary and acid foods.
3. Limit the number of between-meal snacks. When you must snack, choose nutritious foods that are low in sugar.
4. Brush teeth thoroughly twice a day.
5. Floss at least once a day.
6. Visit your dentist regularly for cleanings and oral exams.

\*Tips Courtesy of American Dental Association

## Dry Mouth

Many conditions and medications can cause a lack of saliva resulting in dry mouth. This increases the risk for cavities. To reduce the effects of dry mouth, try the following:

1. Use moist foods.
2. Increase fluids.
3. Avoid problem foods, especially those that are chewy, crumbly, sticky, and dry.
4. Flavor water with lemon or lime, use citrus flavored seltzers, or suck on sugar free candies.

## Denture Care

Proper denture care is important for both the care of your dentures and the health of your mouth.

1. Handle dentures with care.
2. Brush and rinse dentures daily. Brushing helps to remove plaque build-up and helps to prevent potential staining. Use a brush with soft bristles. Avoid using a hard-bristled brush as it can damage or wear down the surface of the dentures. In between brushings, rinse your dentures after every meal.
3. Clean dentures with a cleaner. Many toothpastes may be too abrasive for your dentures. Consult your dentist for appropriate cleaning methods. Typically hand soap and mild dishwashing liquid can be used for cleaning.
4. When not wearing dentures, keep them in a denture cleanser soaking solution or room temperature water. If your dentures have metal attachments consult your dentist for appropriate soaking solutions, as some may cause metal to tarnish. Never place dentures in hot water – this can cause them to warp.

\*Information courtesy of [www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com)



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